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The writer of this book has done it admirably. He evidently connected in his own mind this sacrifice with the deal, rather than with the living; yet where he relates the sacrifice—v. 43 and 46—he does not say it was for the dead; he describes it exactly as it was, in the true translation. Verse 44 is not the relation of the fact, but his own reflection on the fact, which may be right or wrong, without injury to his character for fidelity as an historian.

We are, therefore, to consider this verse not as the relation of a fact, but as the inference which he drew from the fact he relates.

Now, how could the writer of this book know the secret thoughts of Judas's mind? How could he know that Judas was *thinking* of the resurrection? If the writer was inspired he could know it; but if he was only an uninspired man, it could only be a guess.

Now, we are prepared to affirm that this writer was wrong in supposing that Judas offered this sacrifice with any regard to the resurrection of those who were slain. And still more, we are prepared to expect that "W. C. Search" himself will, on reflection, agree with us that the writer was wrong in this (though, perhaps, not on exactly the same grounds that we think so). Now, let "W. C. Search" mark this; the man who died on that occasion died in mortal sin. They carried in their clothes the proofs of their idolatry; perhaps in hopes to have the protection of the heathen gods in the battle; but whatever their motive, their sin was idolatry, which was a mortal sin. "W. C. Search" will not deny this. Even the note on the Douay Bible acknowledges the sin of which they were guilty to be a mortal sin, which cannot be denied, if we look to Deuteronomy vii. 25, 26. That note in the Douay Bible supposed these men might be excused through ignorance; but how could any Jew be ignorant that heathen idolatry was a mortal sin? what Jew could be ignorant that heathen idols were the accursed thing? Let "W. C. Search" mark this; if that sacrifice was offered for the dead, it was offered for those that were known and known to have died in mortal sin.

Let "W. C. Search" now look back to this sentence in his letter from above, in which he brings this history as a proof "that the practice of praying for the dead was the same among the ancient Jews, as among the early Christians, and Roman Catholics of the present day." If that history of the Maccabees prove anything at all of the practice of the Jews about prayer and sacrifice for the dead, it proves that they prayed and sacrificed for those who died in mortal sin, that they might be loosed from their sins. Do "Roman Catholics of the present day" pray and offer sacrifice for those who die in mortal sin, that they may be loosed from their sins? "W. C. Search" will tell us that they do not—that they consider this a wicked and heretical doctrine; and that it is condemned by their church as such. How, then, can he tell us that this history proves that the practice of the Jews was the same as theirs?

We have only to add one word on "W. C. Search's" argument from the silence of Christ. To make the argument of any force it would be necessary that the practice in question should be shown to have been a constant part of the public worship of the Jews—that is to say, that they practised it *always and continually* as a part of their public worship. If it was a thing done only once, 163 years before Christ, and not repeated from day to day continually, then our Saviour's silence concerning it is no approbation, any more than his silence about any other act of the Jews, in former times, is an approbation of it. Now, the history of it, even as it is given in the Douay translation, does not profess to speak of what was done always and from day to day among the Jews, but only of what was done on that particular occasion. But we need not insist further on this; if the history proves anything of the practice of the Jews in our Saviour's time, it proves that their public worship then comprised prayer and sacrifice for those who died in mortal sin, that they might be loosed from their sins. Will "W. C. Search" say that our Saviour by his silence, or any other way, approved of this? If he did, why did the Church of Rome condemn it now, as she certainly does?

We now appeal to "W. C. Search" whether this be not conclusive proof that the reflections which the writer of this book of 2nd Maccabees makes on the facts which he records, are uninspired, and subject to error? Will he now maintain that the opinion of this writer, contradictory as it is not only to the doctrine of the Gospel, but even to the teaching of the Church of Rome, must needs be inspired? We add nothing to this, but that the writer of this book is allowed to have been a Greek, and, as such, may have had no opportunity of witnessing the public worship of the Jews. See Acts xxi. 28, 29.

The writer of this has been compelled to consider this subject in a brief space of time, and under a great pressure of other business. He now thanks "W. C. Search" for having forced him to do it. He feels it to be a practical proof to himself of the value of the discussion and researches which this journal was intended to promote, and which "W. C. Search" has efficiently promoted; and he trusts that "W. C. Search" will now feel that the writers in this journal desire rightly

to understand and to do full justice to the arguments of opponents, that they are ready to acknowledge an error when they have committed it, and that they are anxious only for a fair discussion of important questions, with a view to the promotion of truth.

We must be brief on the remainder of this letter. "W. C. Search" says—"With respect to your observations on my quotations from some of the Fathers of the three and four first centuries, I leave your readers to exercise their private judgment, and arrive at their own conclusions." Our answer was this—that quotations from the three first centuries only were applicable to the letter which "W. C. Search" undertook to answer—that he brought only two witnesses from those three centuries for the doctrine of Purgatory—of whom we had to say, "One of them believed it only after he left the Catholic Church; the other, who was always a Catholic, never believed it at all." We refer our readers back to that article for the proofs we gave (July number, pages 81 and 82); and we join with "W. C. Search" in leaving it to our readers to exercise their private judgment, and arrive at their own conclusions.

"W. C. Search" complains that we did not take notice of all the passages which he quoted. We beg to repeat the reason that we then gave—"We have purposely omitted the proofs which 'W. C. Search' has brought from the fourth century, because they are no answer at all to the question, whether purgatory can be proved from the writings of the first three centuries. Our business in this article is to examine that article by itself. We shall, however, examine them (the proofs from the fourth century) on some other occasion." It was our intention to have done so in this number, but having to insert this reply to his present letter has prevented us; but we hope to perform this promise in our next number.

WHAT IS PURGATORY?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR—You have been discussing with some of your correspondents, in the last number, whether the early Fathers believed in a Purgatory; but perhaps it may be well first to come to an agreement what Purgatory is. Your Loughrea correspondent, who signs himself "A Catholic," says, that anything short of absolutely perfect bliss is a punishment or purgation. If this be the test, it is easy to prove not only that the Fathers believed in Purgatory, but that the Church of England believes in it too. For she distinctly teaches in her Burial Service that we cannot have our perfect consummation and bliss until we have it in body and soul, when the soul is re-united to the body. But she also teaches that the souls of the faithful departed are in joy and felicity, and so differs from Romish divines, who teach that the majority of the faithful departed have to suffer torments equal to those of hell in severity, though not in duration. When, therefore, I ask whether the early Fathers believed in a Purgatory, what I want to know is, whether they believed that the souls of the faithful departed were in a state of joy or felicity, or in a state of torment; but I do not ask whether they imagined that the faithful departed are all at once admitted to the highest happiness which they shall ever attain; for I know that they agree with the Church of England in teaching that they are not. Can, therefore, any of your correspondents tell me of any Father of the first three centuries, who teaches that there is a Purgatory (meaning thereby a state of torment) for the righteous after death? But it will be irrelevant to produce quotations showing that those Fathers prayed for the dead, since this fact only proves that they supposed these souls not yet to have attained to perfect happiness, which is not denied. As long as one's happiness admits of any doubt there is room for prayer. Prayers for the dead, then, only prove a Purgatory, in your Loughrea correspondent's sense of the word—namely, a state something short of absolutely perfect happiness; but I want to see the passages produced, if such there be, which prove that either the Apostles or their successors believed in a Purgatory in the sense of a place of torment.—I remain, yours,

A TRUE CATHOLIC.

INDULGENCES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

Cape Clear, July 24, 1852.

SIR—The following respectful letter was addressed on the 16th of June, to the Right Rev. Dr. KEANE, R. C. Bishop of this diocese (Ross). As I have not yet been favoured with an answer, perhaps you, sir, cannot employ your pen more acceptably or profitably, for the edification of your numerous Roman Catholic readers, than by giving the required information. Your reading appears so extensive, and you seem to have access to so many good authorities, that you will probably not have much difficulty in doing so. As you will, doubtless, state fully and fairly the Roman Catholic notion of such matters, you will be pleased to add something of the grounds on which Protestants refuse to avail themselves of a provision said to be replete with such wonderful blessings. Should the bishop still condescend to answer my humble communication, you and your readers shall

have the full benefit of what he says. But if he should not, he may, notwithstanding, deem the learned statements of the editor of so widely circulated a paper as the CATHOLIC LAYMAN not entirely beneath his notice; so I think it would be only fair and respectful to send to his address, at Skibbereen, a copy of the number in which the accompanying letter shall appear with your remarks.

To satisfy him that in writing to him, as I have done, I have been acting in deference to the high authority of a Pope, I beg to call his attention to Pope Leo's Bull for the observance of a jubilee, in the year 1825, in which that pontiff says—"To you, therefore, venerable brethren, patriarchs, primates, archbishops, bishops, it belongs to explain with perspicuity the power of indulgences." Moreover, the great advantage which the Church of Rome boasts of possessing over other Christian communities is that of having a "living, speaking tribunal" to refer to in every case of uncertainty or doubt. In each diocese I presume that speaking tribunal to be the bishop, no higher (such as councils or popes) being accessible to ordinary inquirers; and if he, when referred to, refuses to "speak," what good is he, or how does he maintain, on that head, the pretensions of his church?

I am, sir, your very obedient servant,

EDWARD SPRING.

"TO THE RIGHT REV. DR. KEANE, ETC., ETC."

"RIGHT REV. SIR—A late number of a Roman Catholic newspaper (*the Limerick and Clare Examiner*), publishes a document 'read aloud by the Rev. Mr. Synan, P. P., in St. Michael's Chapel, Limerick, on Sunday, the 6th instant, in which it is stated that 'the Pope has granted an indulgence of seven years, and as many forty days, to all the faithful of Christ who, with a contrite heart, shall visit a cross lately erected in the yard of that chapel, and recite seven Ave Marias in honour of the seven dolours of the Blessed Virgin Mary'; and that 'this indulgence may be gained every day.' Also, that the Pope has granted plenary indulgences upon the performance of other conditions in connection with a visit to the same cross, 'which indulgences can be applied to the souls in purgatory.'

"As I presume there can be no question about the authenticity of this document, may I take the liberty of seeking to be informed respecting its meaning, by you, right reverend sir, as the chief representative, in this diocese, of the high ecclesiastical personage by whom the specified favours are said to be bestowed? I assure you that, in doing so, I am not actuated by any motive of impertinence, but wish to get from one whom I can regard as competent authority information in a matter which I don't understand. Upon the subject of Papal indulgences I have frequently consulted the writings of both Protestants and Roman Catholics, and from none that I have met have I been able entirely to satisfy myself as to all that is contemplated by them or the precise nature and extent of the benefits which they are designed to confer.

"What, therefore, I now respectfully ask you to tell me is, First—what *exactly* is meant by 'an indulgence of seven years and as many forty days.' Secondly—whether by the words, 'this indulgence may be gained every day,' I am to understand that the benefits may be multiplied by the number of days (be they many or few) on which the cross is visited, and the other conditions performed. Thirdly—what are the precise benefits designed to be conveyed by a Plenary indulgence. And fourthly—how it is intended we should understand the expression, 'which indulgences can be applied to the souls in purgatory.' In addition to my other queries, may I ask you what are 'the seven dolours of the Blessed Virgin Mary,' and how are they understood to be honoured by the 'recital' of 'seven Ave Marias'?

"It is right I should inform you that any information you may be kind enough to favour me with, I shall feel at liberty to use as I think proper, and remain, right reverend sir, your very humble servant,

EDWARD SPRING,

"Curate of Clear."

[We feel obliged to our reverend correspondent for the foregoing communication, and should the Right Rev. Dr. Keane decline to furnish him with the information he desires, we shall endeavour to do so from authentic sources in our next number.]

FARM OPERATIONS FOR AUGUST.

(From the *Irish Farmers' Gazette*.)

In the more favoured portions of the country, harvesting the cereals will be in active operation during the month.

Wheat will, in most places, be fit for cutting before the grain gets hard, or is thoroughly ripened. The most approved period is indicated when the grain, being bruised by the fingers, exhibits a tough, doughy appearance, but perfectly free from milk. Cut in this state, it yields more flour and less bran than if cut too early, and gets riper. There is no loss incurred by shedding, and it commands a better price in the market, from the brightness of the sample, but much of this depends on the weather; if it be fine and warm, the grain will absorb all the sap still remaining in the straw, and ripen in